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COMMENTS

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Narrative and proposed claim changes



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Patents\Fax Cvr Ltrs\207275.0338 (CUNO-330.1)

Examiner Ocampo:

Following this narrative are proposed claim changes for your consideration.

As recently discussed, at page 14 lines 24-27 of the specification, support for the feature added to claims 1 and other claims can be found. In our view, in order for the disclosed apparatus and methods to be operative, the tightening nut 74 and protector plate 76 illustrated in Figure 3, and in other figures, must be removed from the upper end of the center post 30 and replaced by the components of the attachment member which are sized to be smaller than the central aperture of the at least one filtered discount or stacks of cell-type filter cartridges.

The importance of this feature is clearly illustrated at page 15 lines 1-12 and in Figure 7, which shows the center post member being separated from the at least one filter disk to facilitate the discarding of the used cartridges and the preparation of the center post disk handling apparatus 10 for use in another operation.

Specifically, it is believed none of the currently applied references discloses, suggests or teaches the structure having this particular configuration. Thus, we believe that the presently presented claims are allowable over the prior art references of record.

With respect to amended claim 16, the amendments to this claim are directed toward eliminating the cleaning obstacles associated with the prior art housings, as stated at page 15 lines 23-32 and page 16, lines 1-15. Thus, the additional feature providing a substantially direct flow path for the fluid resulting from the removal of the central post assembly clearly facilitates the cleaning of the interior chamber of the housing, features not believe disclosed, suggested or taught in the prior art references of record.

With respect to amended claims 24, 25 and 38, the feature of the attachment member having it outside dimensions smaller than a central aperture of a filter desk or cartridge stack, as discussed above relative to claim 1, is believed distinguishing over the prior art references of record.

Concerning the granting of the interview after final rejection, we believe that prosecution of this application will be greatly facilitated if such interview were to be granted. Further, we believe that the addition of certain features, as described above, clearly patentably differentiates over the prior art references of record and welcome the opportunity to explain our specific reasoning related to this belief. Since no new unexamined material has been added to the claims other than to take the subject matter of certain dependent claims and combine that subject matter with the original independent claims, we submit that no new search would be required and that such interview would most likely result in a better understanding by both the Examiner and applicants with respect to their positions for this particular application and would in fact reduce the burden on the Patent Office as opposed to increasing the burden on the Patent Office.

We look forward to receiving your positive response.

Respectfully,

R. Thomas Payne
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1. An apparatus for handling filter disks, the apparatus comprising:
a center post member having first and second end portions;
an attachment ~~means~~~~member~~ removably operatively connected to the
first end portion of the center post member, the attachment ~~means~~~~member~~ including
5 means for facilitating the lifting of at least one filter disks from a first position to a
second position, wherein the attachment means has an outside dimension which is
smaller than a central aperture formed in the at least one filter disk, thereby allowing the
at least one filter disk to be slid over the attachment means such that apparatus is
separated from the at least one filter disk by sliding the apparatus out from the center of
10 the cartridge stack; and
an adapter member, operatively connected to the second end portion of
the center post member, ~~the adapter member~~for supporting the at least one filter disk
which when the at least one filter disk is operatively positioned relative to the center
post member apparatus.

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16. A filter assembly comprising:
- a housing having an interior chamber for processing fluid, a central axis and a bottom portion;
 - a base member having opposed upper and lower surfaces and at least an inlet portion and an outlet portion, the upper surface being operative to sealingly engage the bottom portion of the housing; and
 - at least one insert assembly sealingly engaged within the at least one outlet portion of the base member, the insert assembly comprising:
 - an upper surface which mates with the upper surface of the base member; and
 - a central aperture for sealing engagement with a ~~center post assembly~~ handling apparatus that has at least one filter disk engaged thereon, the central aperture providing a crevice-free flow path through the insert assembly when the ~~center post assembly~~ handling apparatus is disengaged therefrom ~~thereby facilitating the cleaning of the interior chamber such that, after the removal of the filter disk handling apparatus from sealing engagement with the bottom portion of the housing, a substantially direct flow path for the fluid results thereby facilitating the cleaning of the interior chamber of the housing.~~

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24. A method for handling filter disks from an initial position to a second position such that the used filter disks are removed, the method comprising the acts of:

providing at least one filter disk;

~~operatively positioning positioned on the at least one filter disk onto a~~
5 handling apparatus, the handling apparatus comprising:

a center post member having a first end portion and a second end portion;

10 an attachment member, operatively engaged with the first end portion of the center post member and including means for facilitating the lifting of at least one filter disk from an initial position to a second position, wherein the attachment member has an outside dimension which is smaller than a central aperture formed in the at least one filter disk, thereby allowing the at least one filter disk to be slid over the attachment members such that handling apparatus is separated from the
15 at least one filter disk by sliding the handling apparatus out from the center of the at least one filter disk; and

an adapter member, operatively connected to the second end portion of the center post member for supporting the at least one filter disk when the at least one filter disk is operatively positioned relative to
20 the center post member;

attaching ~~a~~ a vertical lifting hoist device to the handling apparatus; and
vertically lifting ~~raising~~ the handling apparatus and the at least one filter
disk; and

25 relocating the at least one filter disk from the initial position to the second position; and

at the second position, sliding the handling apparatus out from the center of the at least one filter disk such that the handling apparatus is removed from the at least one filter disk.

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25. An apparatus for handling filter disks, the apparatus comprising:
- an ~~elongated center~~ post member having first and second end portions;
 - an attachment member operatively connected to the first end portion of the ~~elongated center~~ post member, the attachment member providing means for facilitating the lifting of the handling apparatus from an installed position to a remote location; the installed position being when the handling apparatus is operatively positioned within a filter ~~housing assembly~~ and the remote location being a location exterior to the filter ~~housing assembly~~, wherein the attachment member has an outside dimension which is smaller than a central aperture formed in the at least one filter disk,
 - 10 thereby allowing the at least one filter disk to be slid over the attachment members such that apparatus is separated from the at least one filter disk by sliding the apparatus out from the center of the at least one filter disk;
 - an adapter member, operatively connected to the second end portion of the ~~elongated center~~ post member, ~~the adapter member for~~ supporting at least one filter disk when the at least one filter disk which is operatively positioned relative to the ~~elongated adapter post~~ member; and
 - 15 a lifting device, operatively connected to the attachment member, for ~~vertically raising~~ removing the handling apparatus from the filter assembly such that the at least one filter disk can be transported from the installed position to the remote
 - 20 location.

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38. A filter assembly comprising:
- a housing having an interior chamber, a central axis and a bottom portion;
 - a base member having opposed upper and lower surfaces and at least an inlet portion and an outlet portion, the upper surface being operative to sealingly engage the bottom portion of the housing;
 - at least one insert assembly sealingly engaged within the at least one outlet portion of the base member, the insert assembly comprising:
 - an upper surface which mates with the upper surface of the base member;
 - a central aperture for sealing engagement with ~~the a center post assembly~~ handling apparatus having at least one filter disk operatively positioned thereon, the central aperture providing a crevice-free flow path through the insert assembly when the ~~center post member~~ handling apparatus is disengaged therefrom thereby facilitating the cleaning of the interior ~~chamber~~ chamber; and
 - at least one filter disk having a central aperture operatively formed therein; ~~and therein wherein the~~
- ~~a center post assembly~~ handling apparatus comprising:
- a center post member having first and second end portions;
 - an attachment member operatively connected to the first end portion of the center post member, for operatively connecting and disengaging the ~~center post assembly~~ handling apparatus from the at least one insert assembly wherein the attachment member has an outside dimension which is smaller than a central aperture formed in the at least one filter disk, thereby allowing the at least one filter disk to be slid over the attachment members such that handling apparatus is separated from the at least one filter disk by sliding the handling apparatus out from the central aperture of the at least one filter disk; and
 - an adapter member, operatively connected to the second end portion of the center post member, for supporting the at least one filter disk when the at least one filter disk is operatively positioned on the ~~center post member~~ handling apparatus and for sealingly engaging with the central aperture, when the ~~center post member~~ handling apparatus is in the installed position in the housing.